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IN PAGE A20

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Former Officials Call Arms Budget 'Unbalanced'

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 — President Reagan's military budget is "bloated and unbalanced," lavishing money on nuclear weapons and the Navy "at the expense of nearly everything else," a group of former Defense Department officials associated with Democratic administrations said today.

In particular, the former officials said the Reagan Administration had neglected the training and equipment essential to keep troops ready for combat, to move them quickly to trouble spots and to keep them supplied in extended fighting.

The critique was the fourth annual report of Democrats for Defense, a group that includes many of the closest aides to Defense Secretary Harold Brown in the Carter Administration.

Binary Chemical Weapons Urged

The former officials who presented the critique at a news conference today agreed with the Reagan Administration on one point: They said a small stockpile of new chemical weapons was needed to deter the Soviet Union from using such weapons in wartime.

"It's crazy not to have it," said Kenneth B. Cooper, a retired general and nuclear weapons planner. "It's crazy to say, if they use chemical, we're going to use nuclear."

While other Pentagon critics, including leading members of Congress, have emphasized the size of the President's military budget, the former officials stressed its shape. They said the operations and maintenance accounts, often used as a rough measure of "readiness," had shrunk to their lowest share of the budget in two decades, while procurement and research programs had grown to their largest share ever.

Cuts in Budget Backed

They said new nuclear weapons and the rapidly expanding Navy dominated the budget at the expense of such essentials as weapons testing, training, maintenance, and stockpiling of wartime munitions.

Robert W. Komer, a former Central Intelligence Agency analyst and Under Secretary of Defense in the Carter Administration, conceded that the Reagan Administration had improved troop strength, supplies and training,

but said the gains were not enough.

"You can't throw a trillion dollars at a problem without getting improvements," Mr. Komer said.

The Democratic group called for "a steady increase of U.S. defensive strength to match the very real and dangerous Soviet buildup" but said the \$313.7 billion budget proposed by Mr. Reagan could be cut substantially.

The group said its members disagreed on a specific budget level for the Pentagon and on what items could be cut.

Competition of Services Noted

Walter B. Slocombe, a Pentagon arms control specialist under Mr. Brown, said the group generally agreed on at least slowing, if not canceling, a \$3.7 billion research program for a shield against nuclear missiles as well as the planned purchases of 48 B-1 bombers and 48 MX missiles. Members also agreed that the Navy should curtail its plan to build 15 aircraft carrier task forces, although that might require costly contract penalties for ships already under construction.

The group said the Administration should be spending far more on fast-

moving ships to get tanks and other equipment to foreign battlefields quickly. "We've got more forces in the United States than we can deploy overseas in a hurry," Mr. Komer said. "I'd like to buy more transportation and fewer things that shoot."

The group charged that the Reagan military budget for the fiscal year 1986 reflected Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger's failure to wrest control of the Pentagon from the competing bureaucracies of the Army, Navy and Air Force.

The individual services emphasize research and procurement of new weapons, which they control, while readiness, which is the concern of joint commanders who have little Pentagon voice, is neglected, the group said.

It strongly endorsed a reorganization that would give the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff more power to resolve disputes among the services.

"The trouble with Mr. Weinberger is, he knows how to get a lot of money, but then he doesn't know how to spend it when he gets it," said John G. Kester, a lawyer who worked in the Carter Pentagon.